

**THE EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION IN WHICH AN EXCLUSIVE  
PROPERTY OR PRIVILEGE IS CLAIMED ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:**

1. An apparatus (10) for igniting a gas flare, comprising:  
5       a housing (12, 112);  
          at least one flow passage (14) extending through the  
housing (12, 112);  
          a body (16, 124) made from a heat conducting material  
in communication with the at least one flow passage (14);  
10       means (18) for maintaining the body at a temperature  
above an ignition temperature of a combustible mixture of  
combustion air and combustible gases, such that the  
combustible mixture passing along the at least one flow  
passage (14) is ignited immediately upon coming in contact  
15       with the body (16).
2. The apparatus as defined in Claim 1, wherein the body (16,  
124) is made from a ceramic material.
- 20   3. The apparatus as defined in Claim 1, wherein the body (16,  
124) is annular.
4. The apparatus as defined in Claim 1, wherein the housing  
(12, 112) is made from a ceramic material.
- 25   5. The apparatus as defined in Claim 1, wherein a heating  
element (18, 126) embedded in the body (16, 124) serves as  
the means for maintaining the body (16) at a temperature  
above the ignition temperature of the combustible mixture.
- 30   6. The apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein the housing  
(112) has an inlet (114), an outlet (116), and at least one  
baffle (118) positioned within the housing (112) forms a  
plurality of interconnected flow passages (120) which

collectively define a flow path (122) extending from the inlet (114) to the outlet (116).

7. The apparatus as defined in claim 6, wherein at least one fan (128) is provided to direct the combustible mixture  
5 from the inlet (114) toward the outlet (116).